

Chapter 4

Training

Noncommissioned officers train soldiers to perform individual soldier tasks to established standards. NCOs also train the small units of the Army – squads, sections, crews, fire teams – to fight together as teams using their equipment effectively.



*Training sharpens the mind, builds the spirit and strengthens
the team*

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For more information on training and the NCO's role in it see FM 7-0 (25-100), *Training the Force* and FM 7-1 (25-101), *Battle Focused Training*.

NCOS LAY THE FOUNDATION IN TRAINING

4-1. Army training tradition and common sense have made the noncommissioned officer responsible for individual, crew and team training. The first line supervisor teaches individual tasks to soldiers in their squads, crews, or equivalent small units. The first line supervisor and his senior NCOs emphasize performance-oriented practice to ensure soldiers achieve soldier's manual standards. The first line supervisor conducts cross training to spread critical wartime skills within his unit. The CSMs, first sergeants and other senior NCOs coach junior NCOs to master a wide range of individual tasks.

"The first line supervisor builds the team at the operational level. The success/failure of the team depends on how well trained this team is, how it performs as a team and what it learns from training as a team. The Junior NCO leads this effort and provides the leadership for building and strengthening the team."

CSM A. Frank Lever, III

4-2. A good leader develops a genuine concern for the well-being of their soldiers. In the Army, this simply means that leaders must know and understand their soldiers well enough to train them to a high level of proficiency as individuals and team and to have confidence in their ability to perform well under the difficult and demanding conditions of battle. The best way to take care of your soldiers is to train them well. Training is the NCO's principle duty and responsibility: no one has more to do with training soldiers than the noncommissioned officer. The Army can provide ranges, ammunition, soldier's manuals, training aids and devices, but none of these can do the training - they are tools for NCOs to train their soldiers. Good training bonds tactics, weapons, equipment and units to accomplish the mission.

4-3. Commanders allot training time for NCOs to conduct individual training and require that individual tasks are included in all collective Mission Essential Task List (METL) training. Commanders also allot sufficient time so NCOs can retrain soldiers who need it to meet the standard. NCOs are responsible for conducting individual training to standard and must be able to explain how individual task training relates to collective mission essential tasks. NCO leader training occurs in NCO Development Programs (NCODP), collective training, developmental counseling and self-development.

BATTLE FOCUS

4-4. Battle focus is a concept used to determine training requirements from wartime missions. Units cannot achieve and sustain proficiency on all possible soldier, leader and collective tasks. Commanders with NCO assistance selectively identify and train those tasks that accomplish the unit's critical wartime mission. The METL is the focal point for planning, execution and assessment of training. This is critical throughout the entire training process

and aids in allocating resources for training. It also enables tailoring of unit leader development training for those competencies required to execute Army warfighting doctrine.

“When you’re in the Army, you can be in the infantry at any given moment.”

SGT Michael Davis



4-5. NCOs link the collective mission essential tasks and the leader and soldier tasks that support them. The CSM and NCO leaders select specific soldier tasks that support each collective task of the METL. NCOs are primarily responsible for training soldier tasks. Leaders at every level remain responsible for training to established standards during soldier, leader and unit training.

MISSION ESSENTIAL TASK LIST

4-6. After the commander designates the collective mission essential tasks required to accomplish the unit’s wartime mission, the CSM and senior NCOs develop a supporting individual task list for each mission essential task. Often called the “METL Crosswalk,” soldier training publications and mission training plans are major source documents for selecting appropriate individual tasks.

INTEGRATION OF SOLDIER, LEADER AND COLLECTIVE TRAINING

4-7. The Company/Battery/Troop is the lowest level to have a METL. The commander gives to his chain of command the mission and METL for accomplishing the company's wartime mission.

SELECTION OF PLATOON AND SQUAD COLLECTIVE TASKS

4-8. From the company mission and METL, the platoon leader and platoon sergeant determine their collective tasks. They –

- Use the mission-to-collective task matrix found in the appropriate platoon Army Training Evaluation Program Mission Training Plan (ARTEP MTP) to determine platoon collective tasks that support each company mission essential task.
- Determine which collective tasks support more than one company mission essential task to identify high payoff tasks. For example, most infantry company mission essential tasks require the infantry platoon collective task, “Move Tactically.”
- Present selected platoon collective tasks to the company commander to obtain guidance and approval. The commander uses METT-T analysis, resource availability and unit status analysis to select the most important platoon tasks.

4-9. The platoon leader and platoon sergeant assist the squad leaders in determining the squad collective tasks to accomplish the platoon collective tasks. They used the same process as above to select these tasks. The company commander approves the squad collective tasks.

SELECTION OF LEADER AND SOLDIER TASKS

4-10. Unit leaders select soldier tasks to support squad and platoon collective tasks using the collective-to-soldier task matrix found in the appropriate ARTEP MTPs. They do this for each skill level in the unit.

4-11. The CSM and key NCOs review and refine the supporting soldier tasks for each skill level in every MOS within the unit, especially low-density MOS tasks. Leader books are a valuable tool to track task proficiency. Information on the leader book is in Appendix C.

4-12. You can find leader tasks in the appropriate Soldier Training Publication (STP), MTP, or soldier’s manual. Company commanders use the appropriate platoon ARTEP MTP to identify platoon leader tasks. The 1SG and key NCOs use appropriate STPs to identify NCO leader tasks. Leaders must be proficient on these and other specified leader tasks before conducting collective training. See Figure 4-1.

<u>Soldier to</u>	<u>Task Selection</u>	<u>Review</u>	<u>Approve</u>
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<u>Be Trained</u>			
1SG	CSM	Co. Cdr	Bn Cdr
PSG	1SG	Plt Ldr/Co. Cdr	Bn Cdr
Sqd Ldr	PSG	Plt Ldr/1SG	Co. Cdr
Tm Ldr	Sqd Ldr	PSG/Plt Ldr	Co. Cdr
Soldier	Tm Ldr	Sqd Ldr/PSG	Plt Ldr

Figure 4-1. Task Approval Matrix

4-13. Combat Support and Combat Service Support leaders have similar documents available. When no published leader tasks exist, develop them using doctrinal manuals, other proponent school publications and common task manuals. The skill level 3 tasks in the food service STP provide CSS leader tasks for a food service NCO, for example –

- Establish layout of field feeding areas.
- Supervise operation and maintenance of the Mobile Kitchen Trailer (MKT).
- Supervise personnel in cleaning and maintenance of field feeding equipment.
- Request and turn-in subsistence.

4-14. All leaders and soldiers must perform common tasks and *essential* Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) - specific tasks. There are 85 common tasks and 70 MOS-specific tasks in ARTEP 7-8-MTP, *Mission Training Plan for the Infantry Rifle Platoon and Squad*. This list of 155 tasks would be too large to sustain because of limited training time and other resource constraints. Leaders use battle focus to refine the list to mission related tasks that are essential to the soldier's duty position and analyze it to eliminate duplication.

Corporal Sandy Jones in World War I

“Corporal Sandy E. Jones [a soldier in one of the black units in WWI], after all his officers had been knocked out and most of his sergeants, put a company together and led it for two days against a hill position. Corporal Jones was the Iron Commander's [GEN John J. Pershing] idea of a fighter...a fighter...a fighter. Pershing pinned the Distinguished Service Cross on his left breast.”

LEADER'S ROLE IN TRAINING

4-15. In addition to the commander's responsibilities, all leaders must require their soldiers to understand and perform their roles in training. The commander assigns primary responsibility to officers for collective training and to noncommissioned officers for soldier training. NCOs also have responsibility to train squads, sections, teams and crews. The commander

melds leader and soldier training requirements into collective training events so that all gain training value from each event. Additionally, all leaders —

- Exchange information. Guidance on missions and priorities flows down; soldier, leader and collective training needs flow up. Training meetings, briefings and AARs are the primary forums for exchanging training information.
- Demand soldiers achieve training standards.
 - Set aside time to training tasks not performed to standard.
 - Plan to train a realistic number of tasks during a training event. It is better to train to standard on a few tasks than fail to achieve the standard on many. *Soldiers will remember the enforced standard.*
- Assess the results of training in the AAR. The leader at every level analyzes the unit and soldiers' performance and makes judgment on their strengths and weaknesses. This may lead to additional training or recommendations for future training events.

4-16. About half of the Army force structure is in the Reserve Component (RC) — the Army National Guard (ARNG) and US Army Reserve (USAR). *RC units train to the same standard on each task as Active units.* However, they train fewer tasks because of reduced training time, geographical dispersion, availability of equipment for training and fewer training areas. Nonetheless, RC units have only two days each month (unit training assemblies) and two weeks of Annual Training (AT) each year in which to conduct training. This requires efficient use of time and resources. NCOs in the RC are among the most dedicated and innovative leaders in the Army and make maximum use of limited resources.

"A lot of time, support personnel say, 'we do our wartime mission every day.' That's not so. You've got to look at the conditions in which you're performing those missions."

CSM Bobby Butler

PLANNING

4-17. Short-range planning is based on the long-range unit assessment and on a detailed training assessment of the unit's current METL proficiency. It focuses on training deficiencies that impact on the unit's ability to perform its wartime mission. A training assessment is—

- Required for each METL task, platoon and squad collective task, soldier task and, at battalion and higher headquarters, each battle task.
- A snapshot of the unit's current soldier, leader and collective task proficiency.
- A comparison of task proficiency with *Army* standards.

4-18. Training meetings are *non-negotiable* at battalion and company level. Battalions and companies must hold them. Training meetings provide

guidance for forming training schedules. In the Active Component (AC) the primary focus of training meetings at battalion level is training management issues for the next six weeks while RC units are looking one or two years ahead. Coordination meetings should be held to resolve resource issues prior to the battalion training meeting. At company level, training meetings focus on the specifics of training to be conducted.

4-19. Meetings are also held at platoon and squad level. Essential soldier, leader and collective training needs must be identified and sent up the chain of command. Likewise, information passed out at the company training meeting must reach every soldier through the platoon chain of command. The training schedule provides this detailed information. Training schedules provide predictability for soldiers and create confidence in the chain of command. Near-term planning conducted at the training meeting results in detailed training schedules. The training schedule is the unit's primary management tool to ensure training is conducted on time and by qualified trainers with the necessary resources.

The Training Schedule

Once the battalion commander approves and the company commander signs the training schedule, it is locked in and constitutes an official order

4-20. Only the approving authority can change the training schedule; for example, for the company, it is normally the battalion commander. Higher headquarters must then protect units from unprogrammed events, activities and other distracters. Leaders must ensure daily training is conducted to standard and adheres to the training schedule. CSMs and ISGs are key to making this happen. Soldiers have a legal responsibility to attend scheduled training.

4-21. Training cannot happen if essential equipment and systems (such as tracks, weapons, wheeled vehicles, or radios) are Nonmission Capable (NMC). Everyone (leaders, maintenance personnel and operators) must be trained and involved to improve and sustain the unit's maintenance posture. In war, soldiers and crews perform Preventive Maintenance Checks and Services (PMCS) under combat conditions often without the normal direction and supervision of superiors. This requires maintenance personnel and equipment or vehicle operators who are proficient in their maintenance duties. Leaders train soldiers to meet Army maintenance standards. NCOs instill an understanding of and the know-how to perform day-to-day maintenance operations.

PREPARATION

4-22. Formal planning for training culminates with the publication of the training schedule. Informal planning, detailed coordination and pre-execution

checks continue until the training is performed. Well prepared trainers, soldiers and support personnel are ready to participate and their facilities, equipment and materials are ready to use.

4-23. Proper preparation gives trainers confidence in their ability to train. They must rehearse their preparations and review the tasks and subtasks to be covered during their training. To prepare trainers to conduct performance-oriented training, commanders and leaders provide preparation time so that the trainer can—

- Review references, such as ARTEP 71-2-MTP, soldier's manuals, FM's and TMs to understand tasks, conditions and standards.
- Prepare a Task & Evaluation Outline.
- Gather and prepare training support items, equipment and supplies such as Multiple Integrated Laser Engagement System (MILES), other Training Aids, Devices, Simulator and Simulations (TADSS) and Class III and IX.
- Conduct a reconnaissance of training site.
- Prepare the soldiers for training.

4-24. Commanders and leaders also conduct rehearsals to—

- Identify weak points in the training plan.
- Teach effective training techniques and coach as needed.
- Ensure all safety and environmental considerations are met.
- Determine how the trainer will evaluate the soldiers' or unit's performance at the end of training for compliance with the training objective.
- Assess subordinate trainer competencies and provide developmental feedback to them throughout the training preparation and execution process.
- Give them confidence in their ability to train.

“Good work requires much thought and concentrated thinking is the secret of genius.”

SSG Ray H. Duncan

4-25. Leaders use MTPs, soldier's manuals, drill books and similar publications to develop the Training and Evaluation Outline (T&EO). Whenever possible, they use the published T&EO.

4-26. To conduct effective, meaningful training for soldiers, leaders and units, thorough preparation is essential. Leaders themselves must be able to perform the task before trying to teach others. Proper preparation gives them confidence in their ability to train. After proper planning and preparation are complete, soldiers, leaders and units are ready to execute training to standard.

The 555th Parachute Infantry – ‘Triple Nickles’

The Triple Nickles (a misspelling at the time that just stuck) – the 555th Parachute Infantry Battalion — was formed in November 1944.

Almost all of the officers, NCOs and enlisted men served in the same unit for years and through hard training they developed camaraderie and respect for each other. Everyone was trained thoroughly from the basics of a soldier's individual survival needs to team tactics for combat. The battalion conducted simulated combat jumps and tactical exercises and in each rotated leader roles to develop leadership skills at the lowest level. During these exercises each soldier had the opportunity to lead and command. In early 1945 the 555th engaged in advanced unit combat training and grew to over four hundred men.

Some of the new arrivals were combat veterans from units in Europe and the Pacific. These veterans, on their way to the unit, had already received not only jump training, but also special advanced training at Fort Benning as riggers, demolition men, jumpmasters or pathfinders. After an intensive two-month training program, the Triple Nickles were ready to take on anybody. But by April 1945 the German armies had collapsed and Americans and Russians met on the Elbe River.

The close of the war in Europe in May 1945 brought the Triple Nickles a change of mission. To combat fires in the western US, some of which were started by enemy 'balloon bombs,' they received new parachute training that included three jumps; two in clearings, one in heavy forest. In mid July, the battalion had qualified as Smoke Jumpers — the Army's only airborne firefighters. Soon their operations would range over seven western states. All missions were risky and tough. Jumping into trees was dangerous and the DZ's were often rough. At night they maintained fire and snake and wild animal watches. The 555th participated in thirty-six fire missions — individual jumps totaled over twelve hundred. By August 1945 the war with Japan was over, the 555th returned to Fort Bragg and became an integral part of the 82nd Airborne.

4-27. Most units in the Army train for combat and develop great skill in their given roles. But when conditions and the needs of the Nation change, units adapt and prepare for new roles – and succeed because of hard training and discipline.

EXECUTION

4-28. Training is the peacetime mission of the Army. The execution of training to standard is the payoff for all other phases of training management. Leader supervision and participation at all levels are essential to the successful execution of training. Battle focused leaders ensure that planned training is started on time and executed vigorously to standard. Leaders assess soldier, leader and unit performance throughout the execution phase. They provide feedback to allow soldiers to learn from their strengths and weaknesses and to subsequently adjust their own training programs.

“Survival in combat is not solely a matter of luck. Doing things the right way is more important than luck in coming through a battle alive. And training teaches you to do things the right way.... It’s training that defeats the enemy and saves lives.”

SMA William O. Wooldridge

NCOs Make it Happen

4-29. Senior NCOs are responsible for getting soldiers, subordinate leaders and units to the training sites. They ensure that soldiers are at the right location, in the right uniform, with the right equipment, at the right time. Further, senior NCOs ensure—

- Detailed inspections and checks are performed prior to all training.
- Prerequisite training is completed so that soldiers' time is not wasted.
- Leaders are trained and prepared to train their squads, sections, teams, or crews. They *train the trainers*.
- Preliminary training for squad, section, team and crew has the right focus and is executed to Army standard.
- Training includes a realistic number of tasks.
- Soldiers train to standard and meet the training objectives. Special emphasis is on low-density MOSs.
- The schedule allows adequate time to repeat tasks not performed to standard the first time.
- Soldiers are properly motivated and well led.
- Soldiers are present and accounted for, especially during STT.

4-30. NCOs are the primary trainers. They are responsible to—

- Account for their soldiers.
- Know their units' and soldiers' training needs and plan appropriate time to train tasks to standard.
- Conduct a rehearsal.
- Identify and conduct appropriate prerequisite training.
- Ensure training is conducted to standard.
- Retrain soldiers when standards are not met.
- Be properly prepared to conduct opportunity training whenever time is available.

"Only perfect practice makes perfect."

SFC Lydia Mead

4-31. Presentation of training provides soldiers with the specific training objectives (tasks, conditions and standards) to be trained and the evaluation methods to be used. The exact type and amount of information presented prior to performing the task depends on the task and the state of training of the soldiers being trained.

“[When an instructor] knows his topic thoroughly, he is eager to pour it out.”

MSG Jose R. Carmona

STANDARDS

4-32. Leaders emphasize accomplishing training to standard by identifying the Army standard and, more importantly, by *demanding that soldiers meet those standards*. They ensure soldiers understand when they have not performed training to standard. Leaders must allow sufficient time to retrain the task until it can be performed correctly.

“An NCO must know what right looks like and must prepare. As NCOs we never stop learning and must seek guidance from manuals and our leaders to ensure we know the standard. NCOs must be at the training from preparation to execution through retraining.”

CSM Mary E. Sutherland

OTHER LEADER CONCERNS IN TRAINING

REALISM

4-33. Units should train in peacetime as they will fight during war. Peacetime training must replicate battlefield conditions as closely as resources permit. All training is based on this principle. Leaders must ensure that soldiers are trained to cope with complex, stressful and lethal situations they will encounter in combat. Achieve this by—

- Enforcing high standards.
- Training soldiers, leaders and units in a near wartime environment, not in the classroom.
- Ensuring all training is tactically oriented.
- Ensuring Opposing Forces (OPFOR) use appropriate threat or capabilities based doctrine, tactics and equipment.
- Integrating realistic conditions by increasing the difficulty of tasks, such as—
 - Simulate the loss of key leaders.
 - Use of smoke on the battlefield.
 - Require casualty evacuation.
 - Simulate nuclear, biological, chemical (NBC) situations.
 - Replicate battlefield debris.
 - Train in conditions of limited visibility or at night.
 - Interrupt or jam communications.

4-34. As soldier performance levels increase, conditions under which tasks are performed become more demanding while standards remain constant. Soldiers and leaders must execute the planned training, assess performance and retrain until Army standards are met under the most difficult wartime conditions. The same standards must be enforced on a task whether it is performed individually or as part of a larger operation. Soldier and leader training must occur continually and be fully integrated into collective training.

Carefully planned, purposeful and effective training...demonstrates concretely the leader's intense concern that the men and the unit receive every possible measure to prepare them to accomplish their mission.

DA Pam 22-1, *Leadership* (1948)

SAFETY

4-35. Leaders must ensure realistic training is safe; safety awareness protects combat power. Historically, more casualties occur in combat due to accidents than from enemy action. Ensuring that realistic training is safe instills the awareness that will save lives in combat. Conducting realistic training is challenging business. The goal of the chain of command is *not* training first *nor* safety first, but *training safely*. The commander is the safety officer. He is ultimately responsible for unit safety; however, every soldier is responsible for safe training. This includes leaders throughout the chain of command and NCO support channel, not just range safety officers and NCOs, Observer Controllers (OCs) and installation safety officers. NCOs should conduct a risk assessment for every mission they prepare for.

SERGEANT'S TIME TRAINING

4-36. Some training time during the week should be devoted to the small-unit leader (such as a squad leader or a vehicle commander) to train his unit (see Appendix A, Sergeant's Time Training). This enhances readiness and cohesion; it also allows the junior NCO to learn and exercise the Army's training management system at the lowest level. *The key is to train the trainer so that he can train his soldiers.* This requires the NCO to identify essential soldier and small-unit and team tasks (drills) that support unit METL and then the NCO must—

- Assess strengths and weaknesses.
- Formulate a plan to correct deficiencies and sustain strengths.
- Execute the training to standard.



OPPORTUNITY TRAINING

4-37. Opportunity training is the conduct of preselected, prepared instruction on critical tasks that require little explanation. Sometimes called “hip-pocket” training, it is conducted when proficiency has been reached on the scheduled primary training task and time is available. Unscheduled breaks in exercises or assembly area operations, or while waiting for transportation, provide time for opportunity training. Creative, aggressive leaders use this time to sustain the skills of their soldiers and units. For example, an Stinger team crew leader may conduct opportunity training on aircraft identification while waiting to have his crew's MILES re-keyed during a Field Training Exercise (FTX). Good leader books are necessary to select tasks for quality opportunity training.

Drills

4-38. Drills provide small units standard procedures for building strong, aggressive units. A unit's ability to accomplish its mission depends on soldiers, leaders and units executing key actions quickly. All soldiers and their leaders must understand their immediate reaction to enemy contact. They must also understand squad or platoon follow-up actions to maintain momentum and offensive spirit on the battlefield. Drills are limited to situations requiring instantaneous response; therefore, soldiers must execute drills instinctively. This results from continual practice.

4-39. Drills provide standardized actions that link soldier and collective tasks at platoon level and below. At company and above, integration of systems and synchronization demand an analysis of METT-T. Standard Tactics,

Techniques and Procedures (TTP) help to speed the decision and action cycle of units above platoon level, but they are not drills. There are two types of drills which apply to *all* type units—battle drills and crew drills.

SSG Michael Duda in Desert Storm

At 1400 on 26 February 1991, a US armor task force consolidated its position and oriented north on a small desert hill to allow the task force on its right to catch up. Visibility was less than 1500 meters due to fog, dust and smoke. Spot reports from higher indicated an enemy column of 20 tanks was crossing the brigade front from the east. The trailing task force in the right reported being stationary and over 2 kilometers behind the forward battalion on the left. Spot reports further confirmed the trailing unit's Scouts were in zone and no further north than the forward battalion's positions (vicinity the 39 grid line).

Two T-55s then appeared along a road 2500 meters to the forward unit's front and adjacent to its right boundary. Upon confirmation, these two tanks were destroyed, one by the task force commander's tank from his right flank vantage point.

A short time later, brigade reemphasized the threat of an enemy tank column from the east and cautioned the commander to be prepared. The trailing battalion reconfirmed its location south of the 37 grid line, with Scouts vicinity the 39 grid line. During this time the forward battalion continued to have contact and enemy engagements among its left flank company teams. Then a tank platoon from the right flank of the forward battalion reported two more vehicles vicinity the brightly burning T-55s and moving in a direction consistent with the brigade spot report. The task force commander gave a fire command to that company and initiated a 2700 meter engagement with his own tank. Within moments, his gunner, SSG Michael Duda, exclaimed over the intercom: "Sir, there is something wrong here!" His commander immediately transmitted a cease fire.

Fortunately no one engaged the vehicles. SSG Duda had recognized the "hot" roadwheel thermal signature characteristic of the Bradley Fighting Vehicle (BFV). Quick investigation confirmed this was a misoriented Scout section from the adjacent battalion and almost 4000 meters forward of the reported positions.

4-40. A ***battle drill*** is a collective action that platoon and smaller units rapidly execute without applying a deliberate decision making process.

- Battle drills require minimal leader orders to accomplish and are standard throughout the Army.
- They continue sequential actions that are vital to success in combat or critical to preserving life.
- They are trained responses to enemy actions or leader's orders.
- Battle drills represent mental steps followed for offensive and defensive actions in training and combat.

4-41. A **crew drill** is a collective action that the crew of a weapon or system must perform to employ the weapon or equipment. This action is a trained response to a given stimulus, such as a leader order or the status of the weapon or equipment. Like a battle drill, a crew drill requires minimal leader orders to accomplish and is standard throughout the Army.

“No football coach sends his team out to scrimmage on the first day of practice. He would end up with chaos and a lot of injuries. Instead, he drills the players on individual skills like blocking, tackling and passing. Then he works on collective tasks such as setting up the pocket and pass-release timing. When the players are trained to proficiency in these skills, the coach has them work on plays.”

SSG Rico Johnston

ASSESSMENT

4-42. Leaders use evaluations and other feedback to assess soldier, leader and unit proficiency. The analysis of the information provided through evaluations is key to the commander's assessment.

4-43. The unit assessment is made by the commander. It is based on his firsthand observations and input from all leaders (officer and NCO) and it is the base upon which a training strategy is developed. The unit assessment is—

- Developed using evaluations, reports, leader books, or records.
- A continuous process though formal assessment is usually conducted at the start of planning phases and after major training events.
- Used to set or update unit goals and objectives.
- Influenced by future events; for example, personnel turnover, new equipment fielding, or force structure changes.

4-44. The CSM, 1SGs, platoon sergeants, squad leaders and other key NCOs provide input on squad, section, team and soldier proficiency on essential soldier tasks for the commander's assessment. Leaders also provide input to the commander's assessment of leader proficiency and provide planning recommendations on integrating selected essential leader and soldier tasks into collective mission essential tasks.

ASSESSMENT TOOLS

4-45. NCOs may use a leader book and battle roster to assess section, squad, crew and soldier tasks. Battle rosters provide a way to record key systems crew data. Battle rosters—

- May be maintained formally or informally.
- Are maintained at battalion level and below.

- Track key weapon and support systems, such as tanks, attack helicopters, howitzers, radars, trucks and tube launched, optically tracked, wire-guided (TOW) missiles.
- Track crew data such as stability, manning or qualification status.
- Designate qualified back-up crewmembers.
- Identify soldiers to enable them to train as a designated crew.

4-46. The After-Action Review (AAR) is a structured review process that allows training participants to discover for themselves what happened, why it happened and how it can be done better. AARs—

- Focus on the training objectives — Was the mission accomplished?
- Emphasize meeting Army standards (not who won or lost).
- Encourage soldiers to discover important lessons from the training event.
- Allow a large number of soldiers and leaders (including OPFOR) to participate so those lessons learned can be shared.

4-47. The AAR has four parts:

- Review what was supposed to happen (training plan).
- Establish what happened (to include OPFOR point of view).
- Determine what was right or wrong with what happened.
- Determine how the task should be done differently next time.

AARs are one of the best learning tools we have.... AARs must be a two-way communication between the NCO and the soldiers. They are not lectures.

Center for Army Lessons Learned

TRAINING MEETINGS

4-48. Battalions and companies must conduct training meetings. The focus at battalion and company is in scheduling training based on commanders' assessments. But it is helpful for platoons to conduct training meetings in preparation for company training meetings.

4-49. At the platoon training meeting the focus should be in developing those assessments of individual and crew training levels and communicating these to the higher commander. The platoon meetings also focus on the actual preparation, rehearsal and execution of upcoming training. In any event, all NCOs of the platoon should be there to advise the platoon sergeant and platoon leader of their soldiers' training status and recommend additional training.

4-50. The platoon sergeant ensures that all NCOs are prepared for the meeting. This means everyone being on time and properly equipped. At a minimum, NCOs need to bring their leader book, paper and pencil/pen, training schedules and a calendar to the meeting.

4-51. Platoons follow an established agenda when executing training meetings. This allows for a quick and efficient meeting as in issuing an Operation Order (OPORD) for a tactical operation. Keeping in mind the three objectives of platoon meetings, a sample agenda is:

- Squad or section training assessments.
- Platoon leader's assessment.
- Preparation for training.
- Future training.
- Command guidance.

4-52. After the company and battalion have had training meetings at their respective levels, important information comes back through the chain of command. A technique to getting this information to all the soldiers is to meet with key leaders and put out information affecting the platoon.

4-53. The NCO's role in training is not only as the trainer of individual soldiers and small units – though clearly that is the primary role. NCOs know the level of training of their soldiers and small units. NCOs must convey this information through the chain of command so training events improve or sustain individual and collective training levels. It is vitally important for NCOs to be involved in assessment and planning of training, as well as preparation and execution.

***Leading and training American soldiers – the
best job in the world!***